

## OLD TIMES

Dear Mr. Price:

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In those days the East Fork of the Greenbrier was not bridged so it was necessary to ford the stream. Ice had frozen several feet from each bank of the stream, leaving a deep channel in the middle. It was necessary for the men assisted by Mr Yeager and his son Will, to cut a channel through the shore ice so the wagons could get over. Then came Back River, or—as it is now known, The West Fork of the Greenbrier, and it was much worse than the East Fork. Luck was with us, however, since R. B. Kerr and Harvey Cromer were there at a mill owned and operated by Mr Kerr. To cross this Fork the wagons were forced to drop from two to three feet from the edge of the ice to the river bed. What a wonder they didn't upset. We managed however to negotiate the ford and start up Cheat Mountain. After traveling all day we reached Cheat Bridge and spent the night in the home of Mr Cromer. (Right here I want to say that no one ever had a better friend than Mr. Cromer.)

Mother had walked and driven the cows for quite some distance and had frozen her feet. The next morning it was bitter cold as only it can be on Cheat Mountain. Mr Cromer sent mother and me on to the last top by sleigh to where a Mr Lindsay lived. Mother and Mrs Lindsay prepared a hot dinner for the men who were driving. The wagons went on to the farm that night, making the trip in three days. Father left mother and me at his cousins, Renick Ward, and took us down to the farm the next day. The Ward farm where we spent the night is now part of the prison farm.

In August 1899 we returned to Durbin, using the same mode of traveling—covered wagons.

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With the coming of the construction crews the roaring days began. Durbin in those days was rough and ready, but what place located in sight of lumber operations such as O'Connell's Camp and two rival construction camps could say it wasn't.

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Mrs. P. F. Eades.

Durbin, W. Va.

Pocahontas  
Chap 4

Pocahontas  
Times  
1/18/40

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Pocahontas

Turn

1/15/4



Pocahontas

Chap 4

Dear Mr Price:

Several times in recent years I have read your comments on coyote in Webster and nearby. Do you know why they are there?

Thirtyfive of my forty years have been spent in Webster - have been raised there, grade and school. Later bank cashier a few years in same county. All my life during hunting

season I have roamed the hills of Webster and adjoining counties

About the years of 1927 and 1928 The Cherry River Boom and Lumber Company had some Spaniards or half Mexicans near Tea Creek on Gauley One of their sports was dog fighting They also brought into Gauley coyotes to fight their dogs. It was great sport to them I have seen them shipped by express to Camden on Gauley from Western states Camden on Gauley was the shipping point for the Gauley River lumber woods. Some of the coyotes were turned loose at Tea Creek and others escaped in the same locality.

This may not be anything new to you, but if you did not know it, then I will be glad to have informed you.

Claude A. Case.

Lost Creek, W. Va.

Hunters from Bath and Alleghany Counties, Virginia, are preparing to gather at Muddy Run, near Warm Springs, on Thursday, February 1, to hunt down the wolf or coyote which has killed over one hundred head of sheep for the farmers along Jacksons River the past year. It is believed the varment is denning in the Rocky Spring Hollow.

Dennis Griffin, of Clovelick caught the monster wild cat or bay lynx of the woods one day last week. It was forty five inches long from tip to tip, and would weigh nearly forty pounds. The books give the average length of a bay lynx at thirtysix inches and its weight at twenty pounds. This big cat was caught in a steel trap, set near the boundary of the Seneca State Forest.

Years ago some prominent people in the world outside took to task my brother, the late Andrew Price; how come he persisted to live in this sparsely settled county, to hide under a bushel his bright light as an able lawyer and writer. In time he gave reply, expressing his sentiments in a really outstanding poem. I print it again, to show why we all like to live like Riley on Nameless Creek, where we are so happy and so poor:

The life I live, the life I prize  
Seems tame to world-worn weary eyes;  
Those frantic souls spurred on by  
lust,  
For power and place till all is dust;  
They never know the sweet release  
Among the purple hills of peace.

I know not what the years may hold,  
My dreams may fade if I grow old,  
But this I know, each golden year,  
Makes home, and friends, and life  
more dear.

Each year the heavens brighter  
gleam,

Each year enhances field and stream.  
Come with me to the mountain height  
Bathed in a flood of morning light.

On every side the mountains stand,  
A wful, indomitable, grand,

Yet through an all-wise Thesmothete  
The wild flowers bloom about our feet  
I kouw I gaze with raptured eye,  
On scenes that once I idled by;

I envy not the potentate,  
The rich, the mighty, high and great.  
My books, my friends, my mountains  
free,

Have been and are enough for me.

The Sinsel family is connected with the Dayton family. The wife of Judge A. G. Dayton was a Miss Sinsel; their son is the Honorable Arthur Dayton of Charleston, leading lawyer, outstanding Shakesperian scholar of his generation, and a recognized art critic in the field of picture painting. What I am leading up to say is the late Judge Dayton was the son of the late Spencer Dayton. He came from Connecticut along about some time in the early fifties or late forties to practice law. This he did extensively in a whole block of counties which are now in central West Virginia. Incidentally when his grandson, Arthur, moved from Phillippi to Charleston some years since, the name of Dayton was removed from the list of attorneys at the bar of Barbour county, where it held honorable position for eighty years—grandfather, son and grandson.

Spencer Dayton is a tradition in Pocahontas county, and I have let the old people die off without finding out about his practice and service here in reconstruction times. Of course his family has written some thing about him and his ancestors tracing the line over to Old England and even running it down to Runny Meade, whatever and wherever that was. I reckon I ought not admit I am so provincial and narrow as to have small interest beyond my own Valley and State. But then doggone a man can easily take in too much territory and spread himself too thin. A man's responsibility must need have boundary somewhere.

In the years immediately following the war between the states, the reconstruction judge was a carpetbagger from Vermont or New Hampshire by the name of Nat Harrison. He had come into prominence some what as attorney for defense in the last trial for piracy on the high seas. This was in a Federal Court in New York. The brilliant young lawyer won decision to clear his clients of the charge.

About fifteen years after the celebrated trial, Attorney Nat Harrison came up at Lewisburg as the Circuit Judge for the Greenbrier Valley counties. To say the least, he was an unlabeled character. One item in many counts our people hold against Judge Harrison was his having the

It was Spencer Dayton who came into the breach. He came here from Summersville, over the Nicholas Trail through the Black Forest. It is said he disliked to wear shoes, and that he walked the distance barefooted, carrying his shoes and only putting them on when he came in sight of the court house. Anyway, the service of a strong lawyer was then available to an opposed people. I don't know of any of the trumped up murder cases coming to trial; certainly there were no convictions; eventually through the years the indictments were thrown out of court.

As for the indictment against Captain Stapher in some way appeal was taken to the Federal Court at Clarksburg, where the case was baffled along until the state restored the right of franchise to the Confederate soldier, and then dropped.

This, sketchily, is the tradition of Spencer Dsyton, the lawyer from the North, in Pocahontas county at a time when a lot of good people sure needed the help he so ably and so cheerfully rendered them.

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It kind of leaked out that the indictment would be quashed by the judge for cash consideration. I never heard tell of any of the true bills being taken care of in this easy, quiet, crooked way. My recollection is the court records will show the indictment against Captain Jacob W Marshall, of the 19th Virginia Cavalry, was not thrown out of court until sometime in the eighties when Judge Homer Holt was on the bench.

Anyway the people quietly organized a lynching bee to deal summarily with the Judge Harrison on his return to Lewisburg from the Hunterville court. In some way the word leaked to the judge and he went home by way of Anthony Creek instead of the usual route, the Lewisburg and Marlins Bottom Turnpike. I have heard the rspe was to be tied to the Marlinton bridge when they dropped the judge in the river.

Then the judge got in a mess at the Lewisburg court; got knocked through a window by the clerk of the court; went west and died within my own recollection in a poor house in Colorado.

All this is just leading up to say that the late Spencer Dayton appeared on the scene at a time when a lot of good people were in need of an advocate. The local attorneys were debarred by reason of the test oath. They could not swear they had not aided and abetted the late Southern Confederacy.

Incidentally one of them, Captain D. A. Stopher did stand and so swear. Having raised a whole company, called the Pocahontas Rescues, and marched them off in the Tin Cup Campaign to Phillippi as their captain; having collected some five minnie balls in his body during the following four years of war, the doughty captain was promptly indicted for false swearing. Then he too apparently stood in need of an advocate as much as anybody else.

*Pocahontas - 4*

*- Pocahontas Times  
7/5/40*

Pocahontas

Chap. 4

**DR. JOHN M. YEAGER**

Dr John M. Yeager aged 63 years died Sunday afternoon, April 14, 1940. For a year he had been in failing health, though up to within a few weeks of his death he had been active in his practice. The cause of his death was paralysis, but in reality this beloved physician had worn himself out in service of sick and ailing humanity.

On Tuesday afternoon his body was buried in the family plot in Mt View Cemetery. The funeral was conducted from the home in the presence of an immense throng of sorrowing friends by his pastor, Dr H. Malcom Sturm. of the Methodist Church. The pall bearers were C B. Moore, Frank King G S Callison. Kerth Nottingham, Richard Currence and Senator Fred C. Allen.

John Moody Yeager was born at Bartow, April 7 1877. He was the second son of the late Brown M. and Harriet Arbogast Yeager. Of his fathers family there remains his four brothers, Walker. Sterling. Bruce and Paul; his sisters, Mrs Brownie Gatewood and Mrs Texie Carroll.

In 1902 Dr. Yeager was united in marriage to Miss Mollie Smith, daughter of Captain A E Smith. To this union were born four children: Guy M of Amingo; L A of Franklin; Mrs Elmer Smith and Mrs W E Adlung, of Washington D. C.

Dr Yeager was graduated in medicine at Louisville. Ky. in 1901 and for 39 years has practiced his profession in Marlinton. He had a large practice, which reached to every walk of life. To rich and poor alike. his sympathizing heart went out in his passion to heal sick and broken bodies. No one will ever know the good this beloved physician did for it should be said he wore his life away and shortened his days in service to sick and suffering humanity. Blessed with a remarkable personality his circle of friends was wide for to know him was to love him

"Know ye not that this day a great and good man has fallen"

*Pocahontas Times*  
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